

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 EB-07 CAB-05 FAA-00 DOTE-00 SY-05

MCT-01 JUSE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

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FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5762

INFO AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN

AMEMBASSY KINGSTON

AMEMBASSY NASSAU

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN

UNCLAS CARACAS 13859

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAIR, PFOR, PINS, VE, XL

SUBJ: CUABAN CRASH--JUDGE TO HEAR BARBADIAN AND TRINIDADIAN
WITNESSES

REF: CARACAS 13728; BRIDGETOWN 2281;
BRIDGETOWN 2289

1. CARACAS DAILY EL NACIONAL REPORTED NOVEMBER 24 THAT 11
TRINIDADIAN AND BARBADIAN ARE NOW IN CARACAS TESTIFYING BEFORE
SPECIAL JUDGE DELIA ESTABA WITH REGARD TO THE CUBANA AIRLINER
CRASH IN BARBADOS. ACCORDING TO EL NACIONAL THE ELEVEN WITNESSES
ARE A DR. BRATHAWARTE, N. JACKSON, C. JORDAN, P. AGARO, ALASTON
FERGUSON, AWSTIN TULL, AUGUSTINO SIDNEY, SOOKDEO MARAJ,
CHARLES MURRAY, WAYNE IFILL, AND MURRAY CHARLES.

2. ANOTHER OF THE ACCUSED, LUIS POSADA, TOLD REPORTERS NOVEMBER
23 THAT HE WILL MAKE HIS STATEMENT TO JUDGE ESTABA ON NOVEMBER
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29. (COMMENT: DURING THE INITIAL STAGE OF THE INQUIRY, ALL

WITNESSES AND ACCUSED TESTIFY BEFORE JUDGE ESTABA IN CHAMBERS.
ESTABA'S ROLE IS COMPARABLE TO THAT OF A PROSECUTOR IN THE US.
LEGAL SYSTEM.)

RAYMOND AGUIAR, POSADA'S LAWYER, TOLD THE PRESS THAT POSADA
WAS A PRIVATE INVESTIGATOR WHO NOT ONLY WORKED FOR LARGE COMPANIES
LIKE GENERAL MOTORS BUT ALSO FOR DISIP, THE INTERIOR MINISTRY'S
INTELLIGENCE SERVICE, AND ASSERTED THAT DISIP SOUGHT POSADA'S
ASSISTANCE IN THE NIEHOUS KIDNAPPING CASE.

3. BESIDE POSADA, THE THREE OTHER ACCUSED ALSO HAVE TO MAKE
STATEMENTS TO JUDGE ESTABA BEFORE THE CASE GOES TO A SUPERIOR
COURT FOR REVIEW. AS REPORTED CARACAS REFTEL, THE FOUR
HEARD THE EVIDENCE AGAINST THEM LAST WEEK.

4. COMMENT: PRESUMABLY THE TRINIDADIAN AND BARBADIAN WITNESSES
NAMED IN THE EL NACIONAL ACCOUNT ARE SOME OF THE SAME WITNESSES
WHO HAVE TESTIFIED THIS WEEK IN THE GOB'S JUDICIAL INQUIRY INTO
THE CUBANA CRASH. THE LAWYERS FOR THE ACCUSED HAVE STATED ON
NUMEROUS OCCASIONS THAT VENEZUELAN PRESS COVERAGE OF THE CASE
HAS BEEN HIGHLY NEGATIVE FOR THEIR CLIENTS AND THAT ONE OF THEIR
OBJECTIVES DURING THE PRE-TRIAL STAGE IS TO CORRECT WHAT THEY
CONSIDER TO BE AN INACCURATE PUBLIC IMAGE OF THEIR CLIENTS.
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